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WAR IN EUROPE;

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RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE,

A SERMON,

Delivered on Sunday Morning, July 24, 1870, at the Assemblies Presbyterian
Church, Washington, D. C.

*Charles
Bryndon* BY
Rev. C. B. BOYNTON, D. D.

WASHINGTON:

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WAR IN EUROPE

RELATIONS AND POLITICAL SITUATION

W. G. M. R. A. S.

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THE WAR IN EUROPE.

BUT CAN YE NOT DISCERN THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES?—Matthew xvi : 3.

This rebuke was given to the rulers at Jerusalem, because they did not understand the nature of the events which were passing around them. Changes were going on which involved the whole world, and every interest of all nations for all time. The centre of that revolution was at Jerusalem, and yet the Scribes, Pharisees and Priests had not the faintest idea of their real meaning. The world was passing the most important point in its march of 4000 years, and yet no one was wise enough to discern the signs of the time.

Christians, more than all other men, are bound to look beneath the surface of things, and observe what may be called the deep-sea currents of society. The Christian student of history perceives that all the great movements of the world tend to the final establishment of the Kingdom of Christ, and that the greatest wars, though political interests may be the immediate occasion of them, are at bottom, conflicts between religions and races, and are closely connected with the progress of the cause of Christ, and the general elevation of man.

The ostensible causes of war are seldom the real ones. Often, the political reasons which are presented to the world are connected with the deeper religious motives and antagonisms of race, but the religious sentiment is in general the cause which lies deepest of all.

The war just begun in Europe has been thus far treated by nearly all whose comments have come under my eye as one produced by political causes alone. France, it is said, desires to extend her boundary to the Rhine, and thus gratify her lust of dominion, while Prussia aims at becoming the head of united Germany.

Both these statements are true, but they fail to disclose the real significance of this gigantic struggle. It has a meaning far more profound than this, and one in which all Europe and the East, and even we in America are very deeply interested, though we may at present keep aloof from the strife of arms.

The real meaning of this war then is an attempt on a grand scale to arrest the progress of civil and religious freedom, and to bring, first Europe and then the world under the control of the Romish Church by the military power of France, at the head of the Latin race and nations.

If this proposition can be established, it must be from the facts of history. But it is quite evident that very little history can be taught in one brief lecture.

Therefore I must confine myself to a few leading events, and ideas that seem to be the controlling ones in all modern history, leaving out of view all details, and most of the material which forms the common historical record. I will pass by all questions of territory and boundary lines; all that concerns the keeping or breaking the faith of treaties—these are the occasions not the real causes of the war.

This war concerns the three great religious divisions of Christendom—the Greek Church, with Russia at its head, the Romish or Latin Church, of which the Pope is the spiritual, and France the military head, and the Protestant Churches of which Prussia is the European continental leader, and the United States on this Continent; while England, governed at present by no great idea, religious or otherwise, is ready to follow where her interests may lead. It was with sorrow that we learned both in the Crimean war and in the French attack on Mexico and in our rebellion, that England can no longer be depended upon as a Protestant leader, or as a champion of her race. At present she is incapable of a great idea. Again, this contest concerns the three great race divisions of Christendom—the Slavonian, headed by Russia; the Latins, of whom France aims to be the Imperial leader, and the Teutonic races of Germany, England and America. Whether all these are to be now engaged, time must determine. However this may be, the antagonism between them is real and will not be removed.

In order to place my views clearly before you, we must glance at some of the principal events in the history of the Church, as they stand connected with the great political movements of Europe. When Christianity had become firmly established as the religion of the Roman Empire, the power of the Church was divided between the Bishops of Jerusalem, Antioch, Constantinople and Rome; and these great dignitaries contended fiercely with each other for the supremacy. Gradually, Jerusalem and Antioch retired from the field, and the struggle was thenceforth between Constantinople and Rome. Rome, as the old Capital of the Empire, had greatly the advantage in maintaining her claims, and the Roman Bishop was supported by all the Western nations as the universal head of the Church, a claim which the Patriarch of Constantinople stoutly resisted. The hostility between them was of the fiercest and bitterest character.

In the 5th century the Roman Empire was divided, the Eastern portion having its head at Constantinople, and known as the Eastern or Greek Empire, with its Eastern or Greek Church; and the Western division, having its Capital still at Rome, with the Pope at the head of the Western or Latin Church—the Roman Catholic Church of our day. Rome never abated anything of her claim to be the head and ruler of the universal Church, and made every possible effort to reassert her power over the East and the Church at Constantinople.

When the Western Empire was overrun and broken up by the Barbarians, the Church was not destroyed. The Popes still retained their position, and upon the conversion of the conquerors of Rome the Papal power was even

greater than before. They became the Supreme Rulers, the Dictators of the world; claiming to be the vice-gerents of God on earth, they assumed to wield the power of God, and as such for centuries they were tremblingly obeyed. This power is precisely what the Ecumenical Council has just reasserted for the Pope now, and the Papacy of to-day, as presented by that Council, is exactly the despotism of the middle ages revived, a Church seeking to put down all opposition, and maintain itself, if necessary, by arms.

During these centuries which we just glance at as we pass, the Roman Church left no means untried to subjugate the Eastern Church at Constantinople. The contest between the two Pontiffs was a very fierce one, and they proceeded to excommunicate each other. But Papal bulls were not the only weapons used by Rome.

In one of the Crusades the armies of the West, instigated by the Pope, turned aside from their march on Jerusalem, and captured and sacked Constantinople itself to gratify the hatred of Rome. This bitter quarrel has been handed down through the ages, and has large influence to day on the destinies of Europe.

Bearing in mind this deadly and unceasing hostility between the Greek Church at Constantinople and the Papal Church at Rome, and the constantly repeated efforts of the Papal Church to subjugate the East to its control, we will turn to two great political powers which have arisen and become the champions of these two Churches, the Greek Church and the Papacy at Rome.

We must not forget in our study of this subject that from the earliest time to the present, the Church of Rome has never abated one iota of its claim to be the one supreme and universal Church, whose right it is to rule the whole world, and that she has never swerved a moment from her policy of putting down all other Churches as mere societies of heretics, and to this end all her efforts are constantly directed, remaining quiet when she is weak, but renewing her efforts whenever she has the power.

We will now observe the manner in which this boundless ambition of the Papal Church, and her quarrel with the Greek Church, have influenced the political movements of modern Europe.

In the 5th century the Roman Empire, as I have said, was divided between the two sons of the Emperor Theodosius, the Capital of the Eastern portion being at Constantinople, while that of the Western Empire was still at Rome. When this Western or Latin portion of the old Roman Empire was overcome by the Barbarians and broken up into fragments, the Eastern Empire at Constantinople escaped, and maintained for a time its independence, under the name of the Greek Empire, the Greek Church being its national Church. The Western Latin Empire was broken by the Barbarians into several small kingdoms, which occupied the territory of modern Europe, with the exception of Russia. The Pope still maintained his sway at Rome. These small states were all united under Charlemagne, and he formed of them a great Empire, covering all of Western Europe; and of this Empire France was the head. Charlemagne was crowned in Italy as King of the Romans, and thus he

restored the Western Roman Empire, with France as its head. France, therefore was the Imperial ruler of Europe—the political and military defender of the Church of Rome.

After the death of Charlemagne this Empire of France was broken into fragments and she lost her supremacy over Europe, and her position as chief protector of the Papal Church. The Imperial power passed into other hands. Italy was united with Germany, and at length Austria, her King bearing the title of Emperor, became the chief supporter of the Pope, and ruler of Italy.

But proud, ambitious France never lost the remembrance of the Great Empire of Charlemagne, and her own imperial position in Europe. The restoration of that Empire, with herself again at the head of Europe, and as chief defender of the Church, uniting in herself the political and religious power; to give again law to Europe and perhaps to the world—this, through all the centuries has been the dream and traditional policy of France. This was the central idea of the First Napoleon. He sought to overturn the Kingdoms of Europe, and restore the Empire of Charlemagne, and make France at once the head of Empire and the head of the Roman Church.

We will now leave France for a moment and turn to the Eastern Empire and Church at Constantinople. The Greek Church covered all that portion of Greece and Western Asia, where Paul and his associates labored—the beautiful field of the earliest triumphs of Christianity. The early missionary efforts of this Church extended North and Northeast over the territory of modern Russia, and as fast as these Northern tribes were converted, they of course were connected with the Greek Church. Russia having received from the Greek Church Christianity and civilization, has ever regarded her with peculiar affection as her mother Church, and Constantinople was to her the holy city, as Jerusalem was to the Jew, as Rome was, and is, to the Latins.

A thousand years ago Russia was a flourishing Christian Kingdom, though little known in Europe. She had an important trade with India through the Black Sea, and Constantinople; and this city was to Russia what Paris and London are to Europe, with this addition, that Constantinople was to Russia the loved and venerated mother of her religion. But while Russia was growing in numbers, civilization and power, the Eastern Empire was crumbling under the attacks of various Arabian tribes, and in the middle of the 15th Century, Constantinople was captured by the Turks, and the Greek Empire and the Greek Church proper fell, and disappeared together. About eleven millions of Greek Christians now in the Turkish Empire are the descendants of those who escaped the ferocity of their conquerors.

For four hundred years, the fiercest foe that Christianity ever encountered, has been encamped in Europe on the ruins of the Greek Empire and Church, which he trampled scornfully out, in wars and blood, filling the East with cruelty and oppression, and withering up the beauty and fertility of some of the loveliest portions of the earth; and yet Christian England and Christian France have persistently united their power to defend him there, and during the Crimean war, with the shocking barbarities of a thousand years, reckoning from the time

of the rise of Mahommedanism, ringing in the ears of Christendom, with the blood and tears of millions of murdered Christians crying unto God from that fair but desolated land, American Christians were called upon to pray that France and England might succeed in securing the Turkish robber on the plains of Europe

From the time of the conquest of Constantinople to the present hour, Russia has meditated the expulsion of the Turks, and the regaining of her holy city, which, like holy Moscow, stirs the religious sympathies of her people. And this is the traditional policy of Russia which she will not abandon.

While Constantinople was thus trodden under foot by the Turks, and the Eastern Empire was spoiled, and while the Western nations were prostrate before the Papal throne, God was nursing a new power in the North which was to bring the Greek Church once more upon the world's theatre, and open for it another career of greatness. In due time Russia appeared among the nations, the successor of the Greek Church, with fifty millions of Greek Christians within her own dominions, and twelve millions more in Turkey—Greek Christians also, and looking to her as their real head.

Before and during the Crimean war, the whole power of the English press was employed to excite the world against Russia, precisely as the same influence was used to misrepresent and injure us in our own late war. She represented Russia as moved only by wicked lust of conquest, and seeking to extend a barbarian despotism over the East and Europe, carefully concealing the most essential facts.

But the policy of Russia appears in a very different light when we remember that she once enjoyed a most important trade with India through Constantinople, its great Western mart, and that this trade was ruined when the central city of her religion and her commerce was captured by the Turks. Such being the case, is it not natural that she should be powerfully moved by these memories, by her interests and her religious sympathies, and feel herself commissioned to avenge her mother church, to defend its faith, and to wrest Constantinople from the Turk? She has thus inherited the old quarrel between the Greek and Roman Church, and is of course hated and feared by all the Catholic Powers.

We will now turn once more to France and the Roman Catholic Church, bearing in mind that the central idea of French policy and ambition is to be the Imperial head of Europe and the Catholic Church, as she was a thousand years ago.

Near the close of the 17th century, under Louis the XIV., she nearly attained to her former eminence under Charlemagne. She was the Dictator of Europe. Then for a time her power declined. But almost immediately she meditated fresh projects to extend her power. She first attempted to obtain possession of the great East Indian peninsula, from which to control all the Eastern world for herself and the Papacy. At the same time she endeavored to conquer this continent also, by establishing a cordon of military posts from Canada along the lakes and the Mississippi valley and on the Ohio, so as to confine Protest-

ant settlements to the Atlantic slope, and finally expel them altogether, and thus gain the two Americas for the Papacy; France holding the North, and Spain South America and the West India Islands. Both these projects, as we know, were defeated by England.

This brings us to France under the first Napoleon. So soon as he had a policy, it was very clearly that of restoring, virtually, the Empire of Charlemagne, and of being himself the political and religious head of Europe and the world. He was not religious, and personally cared nothing for the Pope or the church. But he knew the power of the religious sentiment, and was anxious to make use of it as an instrument in governing the world. To accomplish his purpose, two main things were necessary: to break up the kingdoms of Europe, and then re unite them, as of old, under France. How nearly he accomplished this we all know. We know, too, how he was, like Charlemagne, crowned King of Italy—of the Romans. He was crowned with the very crown which Charlemagne had worn; and to show that he intended to wield the religious power himself, he took the crown from the Pope and placed it on his head with his own hands. It was necessary for him also to cripple Russia and the Greek Church, in order to establish the supremacy of Rome. His fatal Russian expedition, and that into Egypt, with the idea of checking Russia in the East and of re-establishing an Eastern Empire under the control of France; these are well known—England checked him there to defend her own Empire in India.

We are now brought to our own time and the operations of Louis Napoleon. But we must now remember the changed condition of Europe, and the world. Within the last half century three formidable foes of the Papacy have arisen, foes, which at the beginning of this century had excited very little apprehension. Russia appeared on the field bringing forward a new Greek Church more powerful than the old one of Constantinople, and threatening to exclude Romanism from the East. The United States has become a Protestant power, ranking with the foremost of earth, and Prussia, also Protestant, at the very side of France, has grown almost in a day to a stature and strength that make her the equal of the mightiest. These are the new conditions which the Jesuits and Louis Napoleon have been compelled to meet. In order to understand the movements of France, we must consider the motives under which she has acted. Through the counsels of the Jesuits she has endeavored to arrest the progress of the Greek Church and of Protestantism. Fearing the spread of free institutions, and the Protestant faith in the United States, she favored the rebellion and attacked us in Mexico, and for similar reasons she attacks Protestant Prussia now. The Jesuits who are the real rulers of the Catholic Church, saw this new peril to the Papacy and proposed to meet it, by arousing the jealousy both of France and England, and by appealing especially to the old ambition of France and the special policy of the Bonaparts.

Louis Napoleon believed that if France could obtain the chief credit of humbling Russia, she would be recognized as the head of the Catholic powers, and thus become the mistress of Europe. With this in view, he projected and secured the famous Anglo-French Alliance. But this alliance was intended not

only to cripple Russia, but also to humble or destroy the American Republic. This double purpose and the special reference to America were freely avowed in England. Lord Clarendon said, "the alliance with France does not regard the East exclusively, but has reference to affairs in both hemispheres;" and this sentiment was endorsed by France. The *North British Review* had the following: "Our trans-atlantic cousins will become a trifle less insolent and overbearing when they find that the fleet which summers in the Baltic can without cost or effort, winter in the Gulf of Mexico." Blackwood said neither France or England must disarm after Russia should be settled, for "we must still be able to say no, to our lively young brother across the Atlantic, if he wants Cuba without paying for it, or takes any other little vagary into his head." When our rebellion broke out, these intentions of France and England were made so clear that no one could mistake.

But it was necessary that this allied power should first be hurled against Russia; but as Russia was neither making or meditating any aggression upon Europe, it was difficult to discover a cause of war. But the Jesuits are an ingenious people, and by searching through the musty records of two hundred years, they said they found an occasion against Russia in the use of the churches at Jerusalem; and after the usual shams of diplomacy, war was declared—a war into which France entered both for political purposes and to extend Romanism in the East, and in which England engaged without a single motive worthy of a great nation. It was pure, cold, money-making selfishness, hoping to profit by injuring another, precisely as she did in our own war.

The result in the Crimea is known. Russia was checked—not seriously crippled, and stands ready as ever to carry out her traditional policy in regard to Constantinople.

Louis Napoleon was then prepared for another step in his plans. France must be made the acknowledged head of the Catholic Powers. For this purpose he attacked Austria, defeated her, drove her out of Venice, reduced her to a second rate power, and became himself the leader of Catholic Europe, and chief defender of the Pope; a long step, certainly, towards the position of Charlemagne. Then our turn came for being attacked, according to the original design of the alliance.

Before the real object of the leaders of our rebellion was suspected here, it was well known both in France and England, and they were encouraged to expect not only sympathy but active support. England gave her aid in all possible ways that would not involve her in war; and France attacked us by her occupation of Mexico. England did this from heartless selfishness; to crush a Republic that she hated, and to destroy, if possible, a commercial and manufacturing rival. She struck at her own race, which few have done, and at her Protestant faith, for money, and to gratify her old ill-will; and for similar reasons she will strike us again whenever the opportunity comes.

But France was moved both by the religious sentiment and by her love of race. She went to Mexico for precisely the same reason that she attacked Russia—in the interest of the Papacy and of the Latin race. Fortunately,

we have Louis Napoleon's own words to explain his policy, so that there can be no mistake. "We propose," said the Emperor, to "restore to the Latin race on the other side of the Atlantic all its strength and prestige. We have an interest, indeed, in the Republic of the United States being powerful and prosperous; but not that she should take possession of the whole Gulf, and thence to command the Antilles, as well as South America, and to be the only dispenser of the products of the New World."

Louis Napoleon has connected all his movements with the old ambitions of the French clergy, and of the whole Catholic church, espousing the cause of the Roman Church in his war against Russia, then pushing Austria aside in Italy, and lifting France to the foremost position among the Latin races; and then invading Mexico, with the solemnly avowed intention of arresting Protestantism on this continent, and of restoring in America the prestige of the Latin race and of the Romish church. These words of the Emperor appear like the throwing down the gage of battle and defiance to all Protestant nations and all free institutions; nay, more—to every people outside of the Papal church; and the most alarming feature of the declaration is, that this is precisely its meaning. To restore the prestige of the Latin race and Romish church, both in Europe and here, with France at the head of both; this, and nothing less, is the central idea of the policy of France and her Emperor.

Since his attack on Russia, Austria and Mexico, the position of Europe has been unexpectedly changed. Prussia has sprung up into a first-class Protestant power at the head of Germany; the supremacy of the Latin race and of the Romish Church is threatened in Europe; and France, urged on by her Jesuits, has made war upon Prussia for the very same reason that she attacked Russia and Mexico—to conquer Europe and the world for the Papacy, and to make France, as the Imperial head of the Catholic populations, the most powerful government of earth, and justify the title of "Eldest Son of the Church," which ages ago the Pope bestowed upon the kings of France.

If these views are correct, we may be able to perceive more clearly than before the real meaning of the Ecumenical Council and the dogma of infallibility. Most Protestants seem disposed to treat it as childish folly, as empty wind, or as a deliberate suicide of the Papacy. I cannot adopt these opinions. Many of the ablest, coolest, shrewdest men of Europe or the world were the leaders in that Council—men who, in their knowledge of human nature, and of the present tendencies of thought in Christendom, are surpassed by none. Such men did not meet to enact a farce. Their purposes were clearly defined; they knew exactly what they proposed to do, and they acted with a full knowledge of all the *earthly* forces with which they will have to contend. Many appear to think that it is enough to show that this dogma is opposed to all liberty and progress, and that it will be instantly rejected by the intelligence of the 19th century, and even by the enlightened portion of the Catholic Church. None know better than the Jesuits themselves that this is the precise character and intention of the infallibility dogma. They do not believe that the intellectual culture or scepticism of our time is any safeguard against religious

error ; and they also believe that the natural reaction from the unbelief and individualism of our age will be towards a church that teaches and rules as by authority from God. Time will show whether they are right.

But let us see whether we are not able to trace design and method in the later acts of the Papacy, of which the infallibility dogma is the crown. Considering the perils which threatened the Papacy in the East, in Europe and here, it was seen that the Catholic Church must yield, or some method must be devised of arousing the old enthusiasm, and then reuniting its powers, so that they could be rallied under a common civil and military head. As a part of the plan decided upon, the dogma of the immaculate conception was by no means a childish folly. It appealed to one of the profoundest feelings of man—the love and veneration which we feel for the ideal, perfect woman, the very feeling which controlled all Europe in the ages of chivalry ; and “Holy Mary” can rouse millions of hearts with an enthusiasm which nothing else can create. In the meantime, the ambition of France, as the “Eldest Son of the Church,” was excited by the idea of the Imperial headship of the Latins, and thus was prepared the civil and military support. Then came the Syllabus and the Encyclical letters, reasserting all that was claimed for the Pope in the days of the Gregories and the Innocents—nothing less than absolute supremacy over the faith and the political and social life of the world. Then was heard the Fatherly remonstrance and invitation to all outside the Romish Church, to return to the fold ; and if these wandering children do not return, they are to receive such paternal chastisement as Rome knows how to inflict.

Now as the closing measure, the infallibility of the Pope is declared, and in the name of Christ and the Church he is declared the Vice-gerent of the Lord, speaking and acting by the express authority of God, to bind or loose kings and peoples by his single word. This act, to use a popular word, has unified the Church, and she stands to-day a colossal power with the military strength of nations to back her, more imposing in some respects than in the days of her ancient pride. I think it certain that the Church, with unimportant exceptions, will receive and act upon this dogma, and that instead of weakening her it will add immensely to her strength. It has provided for her a central power which will unite the whole body, as by the authority of God, for any purpose which the Jesuits may choose.

The war against Prussia then is one part of the world's great battle of religions and races—the Latin nations and the Papal Church against the rest of Christendom. It is aimed now, as it was in Mexico, against the spirit of freedom and free institutions, against the civilization of our age, against inquiry and progress of any kind, except by permission of the Pope and his Jesuits. Every friend of Christian liberty and the political rights of man, of the right to follow the dictates of one's own conscience, responsible only to God and rightful human law ; every friend of an unfettered science, of liberal art, and a literature free from priestly censorship, and of such a Gospel as was preached by Christ and his Apostles, should be in sympathy with Prussia and desire her success. The success of France means the subjugation to her power of the Catholics of

Europe and indirectly those of other lands. It involves, almost necessarily, another attack on Russia, and another struggle for the possession of this continent. It means the overthrow of our systems of education, the silencing of the press, the suppression of free thought, and of free speech, and of every Church outside of the pale of Rome. This is the meaning of the world's final battle with Rome, and this would be the result of her victory. The war with Prussia is one part of the grand campaign.

APPENDIX.

In order to show what the present attitude of the Romish Church is, and what those claims are which she will enforce upon all, both by the civil and military power, whenever it is possible, the following statements are added, taken from lately published documents. From these Americans may understand what are the real issues involved in this war of the Papacy against Protestantism and liberty.

INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE.

The following is an extract from the late address to the Pope at Rome :

"For living and infallible authority lives in that church alone, built by Christ the Lord upon Peter. And as where Peter is, there the church is also, and as Peter speaks through the Roman Pontiff; therefore, the divine utterances are to be taken simply in that sense which is and was held by the Roman chair of the most blessed Peter."

SOME OF THE SO-CALLED ERRORS CONDEMNED IN THE "SYLLABUS."

It is condemned as an error to believe that Protestantism is only a different form of the same true Christian religion, or to believe that good hopes may be entertained of the salvation of those who in no respect live in the true (that is, the Romish) church. This condemns all Protestants as heretics. And in a Papal Bull of October, 1869, the following, among others, are excommunicated: "All apostates from the Christian faith, and all and severally, heretics, whatever be their name, or to whatever sect they may belong." Thus all Protestants are excommunicated heretics, and we know what will follow whenever Rome has the power.

In the Syllabus it is declared that no schools can be approved of except such as teach the Catholic faith, and are under the authority of the church. This of course means the suppression of our free schools and the whole Protestant system of education. In the same document it is declared that the Church and the State should not be separated; and this of course asserts for the Church control over all political matters.

In the same paper it is further declared that science and philosophy should be under the control of the Church; and that rebellion against legitimate princes is unlawful; and that the Church may employ the civil power and force in the execution of her decrees.

In the same remarkable document it is asserted that the Catholic religion should be the only religion of the State, to the exclusion of all others, and religious toleration is condemned. A blow is also aimed at the freedom of the press and of speech. Finally, the supremacy of the Church over the State, over kings, princes and rulers, is firmly asserted.

Such are some of the main positions and assumptions of the Romish Church of to-day, and such are the principles for the defence and extension of which France has declared this war, under the guidance of the Jesuits. Our native American Catholics do not mean this, but they must either approve, or come under the condemnation of this infallible Pope.



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